

Families should have an emergency plan and emergency preparedness kit ready to go at all times. The kit should contain enough non-perishable food and a gallon of water per person per day to last three to five days, and should also include the following essentials:

- Copies of insurance papers and identification sealed in a watertight plastic bag
- First aid kit
- Weather radio and batteries
- Supply of prescription medicines
- Bedding
- Changes of clothes
- Personal hygiene items such as toothbrush, toothpaste, soap and deodorant
- Cash or checkbook
- Pet supplies including food, water, leashes, bedding, muzzle and vaccination records

Citizens should stay informed during a storm by keeping a battery-powered radio for weather and evacuation information and should know evacuation routes in their community. People also need to heed the warnings of state and local officials and evacuate quickly when told to do so.

This year, officials are encouraging people to evacuate their homes with their pets to specially designated pet-friendly shelters. The pet shelters will be equipped with pet crates, but citizens should bring feeding dishes, food and water, immunization papers and other pet supplies.

For more information on how to prepare for any type of emergency, visit www.ReadyNC.org. To find out about volunteer opportunities and basic emergency response training visit the Citizen Corps website at www.citizencorps.gov.

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